

Testimony of Jason Bannon in Support of HB 5747, An Act Concerning Bonding to Benefit
Redemption Song, Inc.
Before the Public Health Committee February 27, 2013 10:30 a.m. Room 1D

I am the vice-president of Redemption Song, Inc. a non-profit 501 c3 organization d.b.a. The Dry Dock in Wallingford, CT. The supportive housing proposal will house 12 recovering families in a 12,000 square foot, previously zoned for housing building for 6-12 month intervals. There will be one three-bedroom, two 2-bedroom, and three one-bedroom on each floor spread over two floors. Over a 5 year period the supportive housing will help at least 60 families and break the cycle of addiction.

At present there is no sober housing for families in Connecticut. It exists for single persons only. Bonding for \$250,000 will enable sober housing for families as a whole, eliminating the cost to Connecticut of families disrupted by substance abuse, which appears in the cost of state agencies including the Departments of Corrections, Children and Families, Social Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services, and Education.

Supportive housing for persons in recovery for six to 12 months is effective. One year is the benchmark; the brain starts to clear enough for rational decision-making. For some residents, 6 months is sufficient. The supportive housing project will have two recovery coaches on the premises 24/7 as well as an administrator of peer recovery programs. Supportive services will include: job skills, transportation, community babysitting, recreation, drug and alcohol counseling, holistic healing, and group therapy within LADC (licensed alcohol and drug counselor).

People who used to call 211 for information now call us. We would like to be able to provide families a safe place to live, expanding our services beyond the immediate crisis, placement services and offer an ongoing, all-inclusive, after care program.

As a single father of two boys, when I was newly sober and going through a divorce, it was very difficult to keep my focus on staying sober while having to worry about where my children and I would live in a safe environment. If a program such as we are proposing was in place at that time it would have alleviated a host of burdens and made recovery much more viable. My hope is that this bill will provide others in our community a safe alternative.